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From the Publisher



The colleges and universities of the ELCA play a leading role the common life of American higher education. Faculty fulfill active roles in the professional societies of their disciplines, personnel from ELCA schools regularly participate in accreditation visits and other forms of work

with accrediting bodies, and the presidents of our institutions take up leadership roles in the major agencies of higher education, to cite several examples of leadership by our schools. As an example of presidential engagement, let me note that Chris Kimball, president of California Lutheran University, is currently serving as chair of the Board of Directors for the Council of Independent Colleges. We can be proud of the contributions of our schools to the American higher education community. We teach students to lead and to serve. Our colleges and universities teach by example through their collegial service to the wider higher education community.

Our schools lead the larger higher education community in ways other than the fine work done by individuals with the agencies of higher education. The colleges and universities of the ELCA are recognized leaders in important aspects

of the mission of American higher education. Our schools have long been recognized leaders in global education, and pace-setting leadership continues in this arena. More recently, the Interfaith Youth Core has pointed with appreciation to the leadership of our community in promotion of interfaith understanding. In these and other ways, ELCA colleges and universities are in the vanguard of higher education's mission.

I am most proud of the recognition given by the church-related higher education community and others to the health of ELCA colleges and universities as a network of schools. Executives from foundations and agencies, as well as leaders from other churches, often comment that among church-related colleges and universities, our network of schools *works*. We are noted as a community that maintains a sense of shared identity and work as a church-related network of schools, all the while living as good citizens of the larger academy and higher education community instead of embracing a sectarian stance. Although many improvements could be made to our network, I celebrate the health in our community that is recognized by others.

As you read the essays in this issue of *Intersections* about our community's vocation to prepare leaders, celebrate with me the leadership shown by ELCA colleges and universities within the larger community of American higher education.

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